

ACADEMIC VOCABULARY

Problem-Solution Essay: essay that examines the causes and effects of a problem and suggests a solution

HERE'S HOW: PREWRITING AND DRAFTING

Step 1: Consider possible topics. Think of some general categories of problems to explore, such as problems at school, in your community, or in the environment. For each category, list some specific problems.

Step 2: Identify the problem and its significance. Identify which problem from step 1 you will write about. Near the beginning of your essay, tell readers what the problem is and why it matters to you.

Step 3: Brainstorm possible solutions. Create a graphic organizer, such as a cluster diagram, and write possible solutions in it. Do not edit while you brainstorm write down every possible solution you can think of.

Step 4: Choose the best solution and decide where to state it. Select the solution you think works best. You might state your solution right after you identify the problem, or you might discuss the causes of the problem before stating the solution.

Step 5: Collect supporting details. Find details that support your solution. You might interview people; do research in newspapers, magazines, or books; or look on the Internet. Be sure to cite your sources in your essay.

Step 6: Explain causes and effects. Every problem has at least one cause and at least one effect. Give details, such as facts, statistics, examples, and quotations, to show these causes and effects. Use words and phrases such as *because*, *therefore*, and *as a result* to help readers see them.

HERE'S HOW: REVISING AND EDITING

Step 7: Provide a "hook." Look at the first two or three sentences of your essay. Do they grab the reader's attention? If not, add a vivid description, a striking question, or an interesting fact or statistic.

Step 8: Add supporting details. Underline supporting details in your essay. If you have few underlines, add interesting facts, statistics, examples, or quotations to make your essay more informative.

Step 9: Strengthen your conclusion. Ask a peer reader to draw a wavy line under parts of your conclusion that seem weak or vague. Then read the conclusion to see whether it sums up your key ideas. Strengthen your conclusion by reinforcing what you have already said.